creation of new assets, generation of employment and retiring of public debt. The disinvestment of non-strategic PSUs will insulate Government finances from the commercial and business risk associated with owning a company and introduce a separation between regulatory functions of the Government and the production and supply of services and products.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Does not arise.

Privatisation of NALCO

463. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finally decided to privatise NALCO;

(b) if so, by when the process of privatisation of NALCO is likely to start through IPO;

(c) whether the Orissa Government, all Central Trade Unions and all political parties have unanimously opposed the privatisation of NALCO; and

(d) if so, the reasons for adoption of indifferent attitude by Government towards the wishes of the common people of Orissa in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The Government had decided in September 27, 2001 to disinvest NALCO through a Public Offer in a mix of ADR/GDR and Domestic Issues to be followed in the second stage by sale of equity to a Strategic Partner after reserving upto 2% of the equity for NALCO employees and leaving 26% of the equity as residual equity to be held by the Government. The Government subsequently decided on July 11, 2002 that work on all the three stages of disinvestment (Domestic Offer, ADR and Strategic Sale) should commence simultaneously. The disinvestment of NALCO is not being pursued at present.

(a) and (d) There is opposition to disinvestment of NALCO. The decision to disinvest was taken by Government as a part of the strategy for

disinvestment of non-strategic Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) through reduction of Government shareholding to 26% or lower, on a case by case basis, irrespective of whether the PSU is profit-making or loss-making.

Assistance for preservation of heritage structures in Iraq

464. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government assisted Afghanistan in the field of preservation of heritage structures and museums;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to provide similar assistance to Iraq as well; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Government of India, as part of its assistance to the Government of Afghanistan has identified several areas of bilateral cooperation, including in the field of preservation of heritage structures and museums.

(b) There is no proposal for preservation of heritage structures and museums in Iraq at present.

(c) Does not arise.

Stand of International Community on Indo-Pak Ties

465. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the stand taken by the International Community on the recent efforts made by both India and Pakistan to create better relations between the two;

(b) whether Government are satisfied by the stand taken by the international community especially the Western Countries on matters to resolve Indo-Pak relations; and

(c) if so, to what extent keeping in mind the statement made by